

Key Points for Testimony
CATA State Licensure
Raised Bill 354

Testimony for Public Hearing
Appropriations Committee
March 7, 2016

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Hello, Appropriations Committee Members. My name is Margaret McGovern and I am an Art Therapist. I am also the Secretary of Connecticut Art Therapy Association (CATA) and founder of Art Therapy of Hamden.

I am writing in support of Bill SB 354 with the adjustments made by the Art Therapy board. This bill would be of significant service to the residents of Connecticut by ensuring that all individuals providing Art Therapy have demonstrated a base level of therapeutic competence. At present, the state of Connecticut does not have established guidelines surrounding the practice of Art Therapy. By creating a license for qualified and competent Art Therapists, the public will be protected from individuals claiming to practice Art Therapy despite having little to no training.

Art Therapy is a mental health profession that helps the individual to express and process challenging emotional material, improve self-esteem, and enhance social and communication skills in a safe environment. The American Art Therapy Association (AATA) and the Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATBC) have created guidelines pertaining to the training and practice of Art Therapists. These guidelines, although not widely recognized outside of the Art Therapy community, serve to protect the public. In order to become professional practitioners of Art Therapy, individuals must complete an approved art therapy master's degree program. Upon earning one's Master's degree, Art Therapists are encouraged to pursue additional credentials including the ATR (Registered Art Therapist) and the ATR-BC (ATR-Board Certified). In order to earn the ATR credential, one must complete 1000 hours engaging in Art Therapy directly with clients as well as 100 hours of Supervision with a qualified Supervisor. Once an Art Therapist has obtained his or her ATR, he or she

can take the Board Certification exam to obtain the ATR-BC credential. These credentials serve to protect the public by ensuring that practicing Art Therapists have demonstrated a strong level of knowledge, therapeutic skill and competence.

At Art Therapy of Hamden the clinicians have their ATR or are working towards their ATR with close supervision. We [utilize the creative process to assist individuals of all ages with their therapeutic goals. Our training and experience allows us to choose art material and or directive that will safely guide the client in obtaining these goals. Without our training, there would be immense potential for harm.](#)

[Please strongly consider supporting SB 354. In addition to protecting the public, SB 354 serves to create another option for people seeking mental health services.](#)

[Sincerely,](#)

Margaret J McGovern, ATR-BC, LPC

Suzanne Scala, MAAT

Sarah Hovick, MAAT

Danit Kenstzein MAAT

Lydia Mandell, ATR-BC, LPC